









WHY DOES MY LAWN LOOK SO TERRIBLE???

How frustrating! To have your lawn professionally treated and now it looks like this!

Do not despair! This drought stress will pass.

In the Berks County, we received about 5 inches of rain in August, and most of that occurred in three rain events. However, September has been dry with less than 1/2 inch so far, and the air temperature has been warm and hot. This heat and drought stress of the summer can cause big problems for your lawn. Mowing a lawn that is suffering from heat and drought stress - especially during those hot and bright sunny days - can make the lawn look worse. In this situation, the older turfgrass leaf blades are severely injured and look chlorotic and yellow, so new leaves must emerge from the crown or base of the plant which can take at least four weeks or more.

Here are some lawn tips during heat and drought stress:

-  Be sure to mow your lawn at 3 to 3.5 inch height-of-cut, and raise that height to at least 3.5 to 4 inches during heat and drought stress periods to help the turf get through these tough environmental stress-related conditions. Use a measuring tape to determine the height-of-cut; don't just rely on the mower setting notches.
-  Keep those mower blades sharp. Dull blades make a ragged cut that increases water loss from the leaves and can be an easy entry point for pathogens.
-  Mow only as the growth of the turf requires it, and only mow-off about 1/3 of the turf canopy at a time; no scalping or lowering that height-of-cut.
-  Avoid mowing during mid-day and in the afternoon when the lawn is under the greatest amount of heat and drought stress.
-  On a lawn that is not irrigated, delay mowing - as turfgrass growth will allow - until after it rains. Good soil moisture can help turfgrass roots access water and nutrients and help retain the color of your lawn for a longer period of time into the summer.
-  With lawns that have severe turfgrass injury and poor soil rootzone conditions - such as soil with heavy thatch and compaction and too dry - consider core cultivation (after a rain with good soil moisture conditions for the equipment to work properly) and inter-seed with desirable turfgrass species, such as a tall fescue and perennial ryegrass mix.